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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MEMORANDUM OF TELEPHONE CONVERSATION

SUBJECT: Telephone Conversation with the President of
Russia. (U)

PARTICIPANTS: The President
President Putin

Notetakers: Nikki Williams, Chico Negrón,
and David Lee

Interpreter: Peter Afanasenko

DATE, TIME: August 16, 2003, 9:13 - 9:24 a.m. CDT
AND PLACE: Crawford, Texas

The President: Yes, Vladimir. How are you, sir? (U)

President Putin: Very well. I'm glad to hear from you.
Everything is fine. (U)

The President: Good. I'm sitting here on my ranch. It's going
to be 100 degrees today, but I'm out of Washington. (U)

President Putin: I envy you but here things are fine as well.
Just recently, Ludmilla and I were remembering you and Laura.
Suddenly, I hear that you would like to talk to me. It is kind
of a coincidence. Here we believe it is a good omen, that you
are going to be rich and live a long time. (U)

The President: That's great. Listen, the first thing is I
talked to my father this morning. I told him that I was going
to speak with you today and he told me you kindly invited him to
come down to Sochi. He said he is going to go, so thank you
very much for inviting him. (U)

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Classified by: Gregory L. Schulte
Reason: 1.5(d)
Declassify on: 8/18/13

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President Putin: Excellent. Please convey to him our warmest regards. We are truly looking forward to his visit. (U)

The President: It's going to be very exciting for him. (U)

President Putin: What should we prepare for him? (U)

The President: I think he said mid-September, if I'm not mistaken. I'll get him to speak to Condi and she'll let your people know. (U)

President Putin: I know he's arriving on the 14th. I was asking what should we prepare for him, what is he fond of. (U)

The President: b(6) (U)

President Putin: Okay. (U)

The President: Whatever. He just wants to visit with you and get to know you. He's heard me speak positively about you and he wants to find out more about you as a person. Vladimir, I want to thank you for the great cooperation that led to the arrest of the international arms smuggler. The press here in America was very positive and it was a very strong statement on our cooperation to fight terrorism. I want to thank you for that level of cooperation. (S)

President Putin: George, if you remember I told you about this when we were in St. Petersburg. I said it in passing, but I did mention it. (S)

The President: You did and I thank you. Now I hope we can find out if there are any Ukrainians or Russians who were willing to supply the missiles. We need to go up the chain and bring these people to justice. I think it'll be very important for both our countries as a very strong strike against terrorists. The press here was speculating that the man was trying to buy the missiles to shoot down Air Force One. (S)

President Putin: Yes, we've heard about this. These are not empty rumors. I suppose they would have been happy to implement their plan. (S)

The President: Well, you did a great job. I'm much impressed by the operation we were able to implement together. (S)

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(President Putin: We're going to continue these joint efforts. Quite recently our Deputy Foreign Minister met Armitage and they discussed the deepening of our cooperation in counterterrorism. Yesterday or the day before yesterday, our representative in Afghanistan contacted the U.S. and Canadian representatives who are in charge of the NATO mission there and conveyed to them our information on the planned terrorist attack against NATO forces in Afghanistan. (S)

The President: Thank you. (U)

President Putin: This is serious information. It was received with gratitude and I'm sure it will be quite useful. I would like to thank you on my behalf for the recognition of terrorists, of some individuals engaged in combat in Chechnya. The State Department recently reported about this. I hope this will be encouragement for the Europeans to do a similar thing. Our experts are talking about expanding this list. I believe it should be expanded. (S)

(The President: Well, we want to work with you on terrorism. It's the major threat of the 21st century and I understand what it means. You and I understand what it means for people to attack innocent lives and our biggest responsibility is to protect our people. (S)

President Putin: Absolutely, I agree with you. (U)

The President: Your English is much better. (U)

President Putin: Thank you. (U)

The President: Listen, we're really looking forward to seeing you at Camp David. (U)

President Putin: Thank you very much. We're preparing for this visit. I was recalling you and Laura in connection with the power outage on the East Coast. Of course, this does not even depend on you but I'm sure it will somehow be used against you. I'm glad you were able to get out of this crisis with minimal losses and as fast as possible. (S)

The President: Thank you. (U)

(President Putin: And please convey to Laura the gratitude from Ludmilla and me for accepting the invitation to come to Russia in October. She will participate in a library festival and she

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(will be able to share her rich experience with her Russian women counterparts. (U)

The President: She's looking forward to going. Please thank Ludmilla and give her our best. (U)

President Putin: Thank you, George. (U)

The President: And we will see you soon. (U)

President Putin: Thank you. (U)

The President: Bye. (U)

President Putin: Bye. (U)

-- End of Conversation --

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